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FRIEDRICH DELITZSCH'S PROLEGOMENA.*

These prolegomena are intended to lay the groundwork for the author's new Hebrew and Aramaic dictionary, which is now, we believe, almost ready for publication. In chapter one, he maintains that the dictionary to the Aramaic portions of the Bible shall be kept separate from that for the Hebrew; because by the present method of mingling the vocabularies, the beginner in Hebrew is confused, and because the keeping of the Aramaic glossary by itself will afford a quick and useful review of its contents, while at the same time it will enable us to make of it a useful preparation for the study of the other Aramaic dialects. The author maintains, also, that the proper names be put in a section by themselves. He will thus shorten as much as possible the dictionary proper, while he will escape the difficulty of attempting to classify them according to roots. In the third place, it is insisted upon that the true principle of arranging the words in the Hebrew dictionary, as the analogy of the dictionaries of the other Semitic languages suggests and favors, is the arrangement according to roots. The present method is useless for the teacher. It is hurtful to the student, since it is liable to cause him to forget the principles of etymology already learned, and necessitates the burdening of his memory with a multitude of derivatives where a few root-meanings might suffice. Moreover, this arrangement has two great practical advantages. It takes up less room, and the space saved is to be filled with references to all the places in the Old Testament where the word occurs, thus rendering a concordance superfluous. Secondly, each root, or word without root, is to be numbered, and the indexes will be made with reference to these numbers and not to the pages on which the words occur, thus rendering unnecessary a completely new index with each revised edition. In order to cut out extraneous matter from the vocabulary proper, all notes, such as those containing translations, comments and conjectures from the Septuagint and other sources, are to be placed at the foot of the page.

The other five chapters are taken up with the subject-matter. In chapter two, he treats of the relation in which Hebrew stands to the other Semitic languages, prefacing his remarks with the statements that each of them has some words peculiar to itself, that in many cases we have two roots with the same radicals, but of entirely different meaning, that there is no historical tradition of the meaning of the Hebrew words, nor any substantial dependence to be placed upon the old versions and commentaries, and that hence our main reliance for the derivation and meaning of the Hebrew words must after all be upon the Old Testament text itself. That this source of information has not been exhausted, he attempts to prove from **רָאם** and **נָהַל**, of which the meaning "wild ox" for the former and "to rest" for the latter he takes to be clear from the usage of the Old Testament writers, and to have been misunderstood on account of the injurious influence of the Arabic. He illustrates further the danger of depending too closely on the Arabic by such examples as **נָלַשׁ**, of the Song of Songs IV. 1; VI. 5, which some have interpreted by means of the Arabic **جلس** "to sit," but which should rather have the sense of "to move downwards," as it is in modern Hebrew.

* PROLEGOMENA EINES NEUEN HEBRAEISCH-ARAMAEISCHEN WOERTERBUCHS ZUM ALTEN TESTAMENT. Von Dr. Friedrich Delitzsch, Prof. Ord. Hon. für Assyriologie und semitische Sprachen an der Universität Leipzig. Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung. 1886.

In articles 9 and 10 he attempts to show the insufficiency of the Arabic for the explanation of the Hebrew by giving lists of important Hebrew roots, which either have a different meaning in the Arabic, or else are not found in it at all. We fail to see that he has proven in article 10, that Aramaic is superior to the Arabic as a help for the elucidation of the Hebrew. He shows that this is true in the case of the fifty words which he mentions, of most of which the very roots are absent from the Arabic, (notice, however **طاب**, **عود**, **شرش**, **أبيل**, **أعمل**, and others); but he does not show that there are not fifty words also which have analogies in the Arabic, but not in the Aramaic. Nor does he show that there are more words in the Hebrew which can be explained by the Aramaic than by the Arabic.*

Too little attention, doubtless, has been paid to the Aramaic; but too careless, or unscientific, rather than too much reliance has been placed upon the Arabic. Bearing well in mind the consonantal changes and the root theory of chapters five and six, little harm can come from the use of any of the other Semitic languages for the illustration of the Hebrew.

Article 12 will be to most readers the most interesting in this chapter, because it shows the close relationship of the Hebrew to the Assyrian, and gives a list of words and a number of sentences and grammatical forms by way of illustration. Chapter three exemplifies and amplifies the importance of the Assyrian. It is, certainly, the most noteworthy contribution which Assyriology has yet furnished to biblical science. Almost four hundred roots, or words, are mentioned whose meaning or derivation has been confirmed or discovered by means of the Assyrian. However much doubt there may be about a few of these, the proof for most of them seems to be convincing. It is especially gratifying to see the number of *ἀπαξ λεγόμενα* that have been explained, such as **תִּמְחֵן** Ps. LXVIII. 24, which is compared to the Assyrian *maḥâsu* "to wash," "to pour over;" **נַחֲשֵׁת** Ezek. XVI. 36, shown by the Assyrian to be a synonym of **עֲרֹה**; **אִכְחָה** Ezek. XXI. 20, which is the Assyrian *abûḥu* "torture." Words hitherto of doubtful meaning have been satisfactorily explained: e. g., **תַּחֲשִׁי** "a kind of goat;" **יִנְשֹׁף** "an owl;" **חֶסֶף** (1) "work," (2) "pottery;" **לֶכָה** Exod. III. 2, "flicker, flame;" **פֶּרֶד**, **צֵאן**, **שָׂדֶה**, **שָׂר**, **מַחִיר**, **לִבְנָה** Obad. 7, "net." The root meaning of **שָׂדֶה**, **שָׂר**, and others, has most probably been conclusively settled; while almost convincing arguments are given in favor of the author's derivation of **חֶסֶף**, **לֶכָה**, **אִכְחָה**, and **אֵב**. In general, we think, if the facts of the Assyrian are found upon review to be as stated in this chapter, that the positions taken will be mainly tenable and that the book will be an epoch-making one in Hebrew lexicography and for biblical exegesis. It will revolutionize lexicography by introducing a new element on a par with the Aramaic and the Arabic. It will work many changes of front in certain schools of exegesis; for Assyriology has shown not merely that most of the words hitherto thought to be of Persian origin are of true Semitic stock or usage (compare **פַּחַח**, **סֹגֵן**); but in almost every instance, it confirms the

* There are 87 roots in Hebrew beginning with **ב**. Of these, 47 occur in Arabic and 46 in the Aramaic dialects with the same or a similar meaning. 15 do not occur in Arabic and 24 cannot be found in any of the Aramaic dictionaries in my possession. In this calculation there may be slight errors; but the strictest rules of consonantal changes have been followed.

Massoretic text as against the LXX. (*Proleg.* pp. 69, 71, 77, 80 et al.), and in many cases it overthrows, while in others it establishes, the emendations proposed by our modern scholars (pp. 70, 74, 76, 89 et al.).

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SMEND AND SOCIN: DIE INSCRIPT DES KÖNIGS MESA VON MOAB.

It is now more than fifteen years since the German missionary, C. F. Klein, upon his return to Jerusalem from a journey in the district of ancient Moab, informed Dr. Petermann, then acting German Consul at Jerusalem, of a curious monument lying among the ruins of ancient Dibôn, and showed him a few specimens of the writing on the stone. Dr. Petermann at once recognized the characters to be Phœnician, and soon satisfied himself of the value of the stone. The romantic story of the stone, with the rather tragic end, how Prof. Petermann received orders from the Prussian government to purchase, how, meanwhile, the Frenchman M. Clermont-Ganneau also learned of the existence of the stone and endeavored to secure it, and how the rivalry between the two governments finally ended in the destruction of the stone by the native Arabic tribes—all this has frequently been told and is well known to scholars.

The literature on the Moabite stone has assumed gigantic proportions. We are certainly not going too far if we estimate the number of books, pamphlets, articles and letters on the subject which have appeared in England, France, Germany, Austria, Italy, Holland, Russia, Hungary, and America, at five hundred. It might be concluded from this that another edition of the monument is superfluous. This, however, is far from being the case. Notwithstanding the large number of eminent scholars who have occupied themselves with the stone, there is still something, if not much, to be done. The unfortunate state of some of the fragments and the numerous gaps have caused difficulties which could only have been expected to yield gradually to the combined efforts of many minds. This hope is being fulfilled, and the new edition of Professors Smend and Socin marks a further and decided advance upon previous publications.

The number of new readings for doubtful places are numerous and in the main correct. The most important one is that proposed for king Meša's father. Instead of כְּמִשְׁנָר, Smend and Socin show, beyond a doubt, that it is to be read כְּמִשְׁמֶלֶךְ—a correction which is as striking as it is happy. Dr. Neubauer, in a recent number of the *Athenæum*, takes exception to the reading כְּמִשְׁעֵי מִשְׁע (l. 3) as not being idiomatic Hebrew. It strikes us as again being exceedingly happy; and if the genius of the Moabites resembled that of the Hebrews in any way, this propensity to play upon proper names, so common in the Old Testament, is certainly exceedingly characteristic. The "pun," it may be added, is continued on through the phrase כִּי הִשְׁעֵנִי. In the fifteenth chapter of Isaiah, with the heading "The Doom of Moab"—which reads almost like a reply to king Meša's vainglorious words—we have instances of two such plays upon proper names. The word יַעֲרֹר is very clearly an allusion to the city of Aroer, and the other, דִּימֹן (verse 9), which is Dibôn, and where the ב is intentionally changed to מ—a very slight one, as the Assyrian, where a similar interchange is constant, shows—in order to play upon the following דִּם. The whole verse, as has already been